

NEWSLETTER

OF THE

U.S. GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH PROGRAM



Under the leadership of NASA and NOAA, and with support from USGCRP and other Federal partners, the Administration rolled out the [Climate Data Initiative](#) on March 19th. This effort brings together open government data and design competitions with commitments from the private and philanthropic sectors to develop data-driven tools that will help communities plan for climate change. Data from NOAA, NASA, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Department of Defense, and other Federal agencies will be featured on the new climate.data.gov, with the first batch of data centered around [coastal flooding and sea level rise](#).

More recently, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released their [latest report and summary for policymakers](#), detailing the impacts of climate change to date, future climate-related risks, and opportunities to

respond to those risks with effective action. This report from the IPCC's Working Group II is expected to be followed next week by the Working Group III contribution, which will focus on [climate change mitigation](#).

Here at USGCRP, the Third National Climate Assessment (NCA) continues to progress toward its planned release in a few weeks; stay tuned for a special edition of this newsletter covering the launch. The NCA will be released as a PDF and as an interactive website, supported by metadata through USGCRP's Global Change Information System (GCIS) and deployed via the dynamically redesigned globalchange.gov, which will launch concurrently. As the launch date draws closer, excitement about USGCRP is growing: our social media following is increasing daily, with views spiking as high as 25,000. Be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and read on to learn more about the NCA, social sciences at USGCRP, new updates to the Sea Level Rise Tool for Sandy Recovery, and the developing special report on climate and health, among other news.

NEWS ON THE NATIONAL CLIMATE ASSESSMENT

Timeline for Release of the Third NCA

Final government review of the Third NCA and the associated Highlights document is complete, and both are expected to be released within the next few weeks. On the day of release, the NCA & Development Advisory Committee (NCADAC) will hold a teleconference to approve the report. Globalchange.gov will host the full report and Highlights in an interactive format; they will also be downloadable as PDFs, along with individual chapters, graphics, 2–4 page spreads from the Highlights, and more. Partners in NCAnet are planning outreach and sustained engagement activities; for more information, check the [schedule of planned activities](#) or contact [Emily Cloyd](#).

Workshop: Engagement Activities Surrounding the Third NCA

Approximately 80 people attended the [NCA Engagement Workshop](#) on February 18th and 19th. Participants represented a variety of NCAnet partners, Federal agencies, NCADAC members, and report authors, all of whom are planning to leverage the NCA in conversations about climate change. During the workshop, participants had an opportunity to learn about the expected NCA products and supporting materials, including the report, Highlights document, web portal, and proposed Indicators System. Representatives from the Office of Science and Technology and the Office of Public Engagement joined the workshop to discuss opportunities for NCAnet partners to participate in release-day events coordinated by the White House. The majority of the workshop was spent in small group sessions, during which attendees created and refined plans to communicate about the Third NCA with their stakeholders and host outreach events following the report's release.

Development of a National Climate Indicators System

The development of a sustained [National Climate Indicators System](#) was recommended by the NCADAC in February. This system of indicators is intended to inform decision makers and the public about key aspects of the physical climate and related impacts, vulnerabilities, and preparedness. A pilot version will be launched in 2014 through the GCIS as a prototype to be tested and evaluated by both scientists and user communities, with lessons learned used to inform the system's continued development.

NEWS ON ADVANCING SCIENCE

Recommendations for Social Sciences Integration

USGCRP's Social Sciences Task Force delivered a white paper to the Subcommittee on Global Change Research containing high-level recommendations for integrating the social sciences into the USGCRP portfolio. Grouped into categories such as decision support, research and data needs, and boundary-spanning activities such as indicators, scenarios, and valuation, the recommendations reflect the dual role of the social sciences in the USGCRP context—namely, that social sciences research is critical both to advancing knowledge of global change and to identifying principles that help make this knowledge “work” better for society. The white paper also acknowledges the challenges associated with bringing together the social sciences with the physical and biological sciences that have formed the traditional core of USGCRP efforts, while pointing out near-term strategies for making progress despite these challenges. Now that the Task Force has fulfilled its charge, its members are shifting their focus to the implementation of the white paper recommendations through partnerships with a number of USGCRP Interagency Working Groups. Stay tuned for more progress.

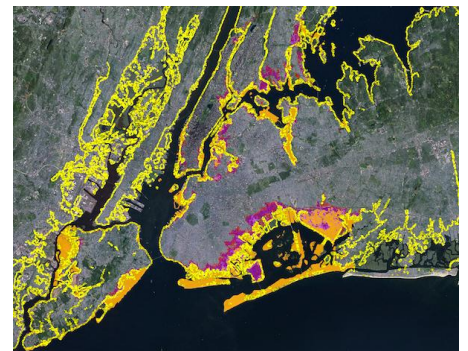
U.S. Ocean Acidification Research Strategy

The [U.S. Strategic Plan for Federal Research and Monitoring of Ocean Acidification](#), released on March 27th, will guide research and monitoring investments to improve understanding of ocean acidification, its potential impacts on marine species and ecosystems, and adaptation and mitigation strategies. The plan was developed by the Interagency Working Group on Ocean Acidification, which includes members of USGCRP's Carbon Cycle Interagency Working Group.

NEWS ON INFORMING DECISIONS

New Updates to Hurricane Sandy Recovery Tool

The [Sea Level Rise Tool for Sandy Recovery](#)—released in 2013 through a partnership between several Federal entities in coordination with local institutions—has been updated to reflect the latest data on future sea level rise and flooding risks. The Tool, which covers Sandy-affected counties in New York and New Jersey, comprises 1) a set of map services that show flooding risks based on future scenarios of sea level rise, and 2) a sea level change calculator that provides site-specific detail on projected flood elevations. Formerly, the sea level rise scenarios for New York extended only to 2050, but now, both components of the Tool have been updated with scenarios for 2080 and 2100 from the New York Panel on Climate Change (NPCC). Additionally, both components now include the Federal Emergency Management Agency's latest preliminary work maps of floodplain boundaries.



Building A Climate Resilient Capital

Three webinars (February) and a workshop (early April) were held in support of [Building a Climate Resilient National Capital Region](#), an interagency effort involving NASA, GSA, USGCRP, the National Capital Planning Commission, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, and the Smithsonian Institute. The fall 2013 webinar and workshop series focused on built systems, while this ongoing spring 2014 series emphasizes workforce, communities, and the natural environment.

NEWS ON CLIMATE & HEALTH

Public Forum: Special Report on Climate and Health



On Thursday, March 13th, USGCRP and partners held a public forum to inform the development of the interagency *Special Report on the Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States*. The forum, held at EPA headquarters, was convened to gain input from subject matter experts and the public on proposed plans for scoping, synthesizing, drafting, and producing the report. The full-day event included panel discussions on extreme heat, other extreme weather impacts, air quality, and disease. Over 100 attendees (in-person and via webinar) participated in the forum, representing government, academia, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations. The period for submitting comments, author nominations, and scientific literature to inform the report's development closed at the end of March, but please check [our website](#) for future opportunities to engage with the report.

NEW STAFF AT USGCRP

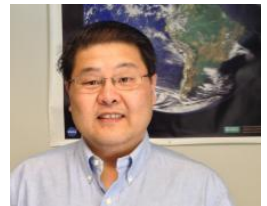
Robert Wolfe, Technical Lead for the Global Change Information System

Robert Wolfe leads the design and development of the GCIS, taking over from Curt Tilmes, who returned to NASA after completing his detail with USGCRP. Wolfe, also a NASA detailee, has worked in Earth remote sensing since 1980. He has over two decades of experience developing software and data systems to produce global products from Earth-observing satellite instruments, including various NASA/USGS Landsat instruments, among others. In addition to his data system work, he specializes in instrument geometry and, in particular, algorithms to geolocate satellite data. Robert holds Bachelor's degrees in Mathematics and Physics from Bridgewater College, VA.



John Kim, Web Developer

John Kim joined the USGCRP National Coordination Office in March and is responsible for working on a variety of web development projects that will improve web presence and efficiency. He is involved in Drupal and front-end development, and will contribute to globalchange.gov and the GCIS. Prior to joining USGCRP, John gained extensive experience developing another Federal site. He holds a BA from Dartmouth College and an MBA from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.



The [U.S. Global Change Research Program \(USGCRP\)](#) coordinates and integrates Federal research on changes in the global environment and their implications for society. USGCRP began as a presidential initiative in 1989 and was mandated by Congress in the Global Change Research Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-606), which called for "*a comprehensive and integrated United States research program which will assist the Nation and the world to understand, assess, predict, and respond to human-induced and natural processes of global change.*"

The [National Climate Assessment \(NCA\)](#) is conducted under the auspices of the Global Change Research Act of 1990, which requires a report to the President and Congress every four years that evaluates, integrates, and interprets USGCRP findings. The NCA aims to incorporate advances in the understanding of climate science into larger social, ecological, and policy systems, thereby providing integrated analyses of impacts and vulnerability, helping the Federal Government to prioritize climate science investments, and delivering science that can be used by communities throughout our Nation to plan for a more sustainable and environmentally sound future.